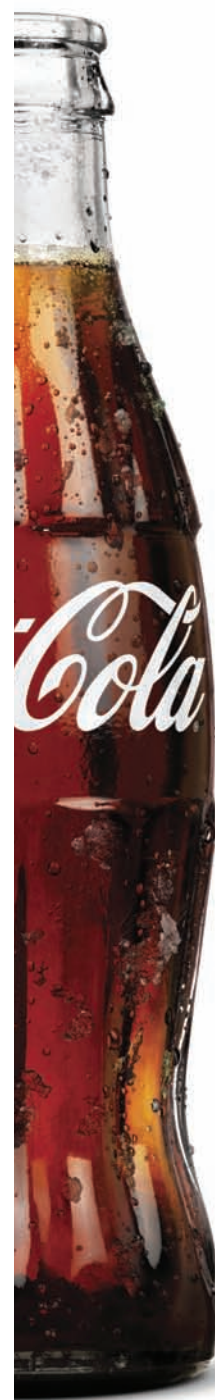


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ICONIC BRANDS BOTTLE POP CULTURE TO ENGAGE YOUTH



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Red Bull drives youth fandom by tapping into niche interests.

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Coke is still it

The iconic brand's 2012 take on using music to reach teens

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Youth Report

From grassroots efforts to targeting subcultures, how brands like HP and Virgin, and up-and-coming artists, are building loyalty among Gen Y

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ON THE COVER

Even the most iconic brands know they have to continuously innovate and stay tapped into popular culture to keep current and engage youth. We chose Coke as our cover model since its programs reflect this youth marketing trend to curate culture and content (see story on p. 20), throwing out the old marketing rule book in favour of making consumers (rather than the product) the hero. There were two cover options, and after much internal debate, we turned it over to our Instagram followers in true youth marketing style and this is the fan favourite. (Ed. note: FYI, "boo" is not a helpful comment.)

Micro-audiences: the new clout

The spread of logos and brand messaging has become so ubiquitous that we're building quite the immunity to gratuitous branding. The carpet-bombing of subways, washrooms, airports and arenas may ultimately evolve into smarter targeting via digital ad-serving, but in the meantime, youth have grown up with giant logos everywhere, from the Santa Claus parade to the ads-within-ads reality fare that passes for primetime TV – to the point that a lot is just background.

I don't envy anyone trying to influence them, especially teens and 20-somethings. So how do brands get from background to foreground, and beyond that, instill any semblance of brand loyalty?

Forum columnist Eric Alper points out some places where brands often get it wrong (see p. 43), starting with confusing an age range with a more realistic culturally-cued target audience.

As we explore what contributes to building loyalty with this generation (see p. 23), we see brands finding success by picking a niche and customizing programs, throwing aside the old one-size-fits-all thinking for a more direct approach. Brands are reaching teens by supporting things they care about, letting youth direct some of these efforts, and surprising loyal customers with exclusive experiences.

For big brands to resonate with the next gen, the challenge is to find a way to step far enough off ad-reliance and overt commerciality to genuinely make a splash in these more psychographically diverse and concise waters.

The youth survey this issue saw a telling increase in the number of individuals naming a favourite brand or musical act that no one else chose – and as our "next big kid thing" pundits identified (p. 18) this trend starts young, and the self-discovery of music, games and even the next toy is throwing the kids franchise biz big curveballs.

As youth as an audience continues to niche out in smaller interest groups, with influences straying farther away from mass media, can the mega-brands ROI model survive?

In lieu of doing what the skate brands do – create endless micro-brands – big brands like Coke, by inviting youth to be creators in its Covers music program, and collaborating with artists such as DJ Mark Ronson, are focusing on pop culture and subculture appeal, rather than relying on the perceived clout of an umbrella brand (p. 20).

Instead of proclaiming "I'd like to teach the world to sing" to the broadest possible audience, Coke is listening to kids' songs and giving them a stage. By creating micro-programs, unique experiences and collaborating, the successful youth brands are building a mega-audience, interest group by interest group, person by person.

A much more complex, challenging, diverse and marketing resource-intensive world is unfolding, and, like the innovation that reignited the candy category (p. 16), marketing is also getting more quirky, creative and

hopefully fun. Youth marketing – where interaction with brand involvement is most pervasive – is the litmus test for what's working next. And in brands' pop culture and lifestyle-centric youth strategy, the new marketing clout is from the consumer.

Cheers, mm

Mary Maddever, exec editor, *strategy*, *Media in Canada* and *stimulant*

PS: Please follow strategymagazine on Instagram – we follow back!



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PROMO! Awards go beyond promotion

In case you missed it, *strategy*'s Shopper Marketing Forum took place on March 6 and 7 in Toronto, bringing together the top marketing execs in the Canadian retail and packaged goods industries to discuss and debate how they could work together more effectively to drive triple bottom-line results (i.e., a win for the retailer, manufacturer and shopper). While there is rarely any consensus, the elevated level of dialogue between key stakeholder groups was an indication that improving collaboration is at the forefront of everyone's mind. We would like to extend a big thank you to all of our delegates, speakers and sponsors for helping make this conference the largest and most important event of its kind in Canada.

Fresh off this latest success, *strategy* has exciting news to deliver. We're partnering with CAPMA to produce the 2012 PROMO! Awards taking place this September. If you haven't been paying attention lately, the PROMO! Awards are no longer just about promotion. Over the past 12 years they've evolved into Canada's premiere showcase of brand activation programs, spanning traditional categories such as packaging to recognizing leading-edge social,

mobile and experiential campaigns. There are even opportunities to enter cause marketing or shopper marketing campaigns that demonstrate real and tangible results through their activation programs.

At *strategy*, we know full well that some of the most innovative and exciting work happening right now is in the fields of brand activation and experiential marketing. We're thrilled to have the opportunity to work with the forward-thinking leadership at CAPMA to help take the country's most exciting and unique awards program to the next level.

So, if you think your top activation programs are ready to go head-to-head with the best in the country, make sure you don't miss the April 19

deadline to enter this year's PROMO! Awards. The competition will be fierce and the party shouldn't be missed. Enter now and find out why we're telling people that "everything changes this year."



Russell Goldstein
Executive publisher, *strategy*, *Media in Canada* and *stimulant*

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Taxi takes a stand against potholes

By Jennifer Horn

Nobody likes a pothole, and the folks at Taxi are doing something about it. At press time over 3,500 potholes had been reported across Canada using an iPhone app that acts as a warning system for drivers, created by the agency's Montreal office.

The Pothole Season app and accompanying website work like this: when a driver/pedestrian notices a treacherous pothole on a road anywhere in Canada, they can log in and flag the hazard using Google Maps and Street View. Municipal authorities are then alerted via email with a request to investigate.

To promote the app, the agency enlisted Morin Relations Publique to orchestrate an elaborate stunt that involved tipping a car into an extra large man-made pothole in Montreal, which resulted in major media buzz, with coverage in outlets across Quebec and the rest of Canada, including the *Montreal Gazette*, Global TV, *Metro* and the Huffington Post.

Dominique Trudeau, ECD, Taxi, says that the app was created by the agency as a "gift to Canadians," and that further promotion included a quarter page ad in *La Presse*, as well as ads in the Zoom Media network in Toronto and Montreal, planned by Media Experts.

Cleary, Canadians have gotten on board with the idea, as the app saw 6,000 downloads on the day of the launch, and it was the number one app in the App Store in the "free utilities" category.

In addition to being able to check the current state of the roads, app users are provided with a roster of global and Canadian stats and suggested routes to help avoid the holes that jar their journey. **With files from Emily Wexler.**

Lego builds its base with girls

By Megan Haynes

Lego is wrapping up a cross-country tour, which introduced its new product line, Friends, to malls across Canada, and invited young girls to build part of a giant brick city.

The Lego Friends Tour attracted more than 3,400 girls (as of press time) to play and bring the mini city, called Heartlake, to life, says Sam Kashani, assistant marketing manager, Lego.

"Once you get the product in [the girls'] hands, they build," he says. "And once they build, they really just want to be a part of Heartlake City."



The campaign, by Toronto-based BStreet, ran from mid-February until end of March, and was supported by TV, in-store promotions and digital, including online games for girls such as digital block-cake building or house construction and decorating. The microsite, LegoFriendsCanada.ca, also includes contests, videos and backstories for the new characters.

The new product, launched in January, is a result of four years of research and more than 3,500 interviews with girls and their mothers worldwide. Lego learned that boys and girls fundamentally play differently with the bricks. Girls wanted to see themselves in the miniature Lego characters and be part of the story. The fun they had building was creating worlds in which they could role-play, says Kashani.

"A lot of girls tell us 'I want to shrink down and be a part of it,'" he says.

While the new line specifically targets girls, with brighter colours and more doll-like characters to choose from, the dolls haven't quite crossed over into Barbie territory; they still click into place, have the iconic clawed hands, and the emphasis remains on building with the bricks. But now the dolls are more visually appealing with brighter faces and less brick-like torsos. This has caused some concern that the dolls perpetuate sexist stereotypes, but despite the controversy, sales for the product have doubled initial expectations, says Kashani.

New frontiers

By Emily Wexler

We caught up with a few folks who recently left the comfort of their previous posts, and asked them about their new gigs and future plans



YANIK DESCHENES

New job: VP, global communications and PR, Sid Lee

Old job: president and GM of the AAPQ

What are you working on at this very moment?

Leveraging the Sid Lee Collective Boot Camp with (RED) during C2-MTL and trying to find the right way to position Sid Lee as a global and local shop at the same time.

What has been the biggest challenge in transitioning from an organization to an agency?

Less politics, more concrete business!

Have you learned any lessons since starting your new role?

I've got to play my A-game every day. Sid Lee's success is no luck. The leadership team is pioneering and the vision is breathtaking.



GINO CANTALINI, NATALIE ARMATA AND ALANA NATHANSON

New jobs: partners at start-up agency Giants & Gentlemen

Old jobs: senior AD (Armata) and writer (Nathanson) at Taxi 2, VP brand director at Publicis (Cantalini)

Starting a new agency is risky. What was your main concern?

Leaving a salary wasn't easy! But [mainly], finding the right partners. We needed to enjoy working together, but also to have complementary skills and a shared vision.

What was your first order of business?

To align to what Giants & Gentlemen would stand for: our operating philosophy (Be brave. Be decent), our structure (a media-agnostic creative collective), and how to most effectively address client challenges ("Outthinking").



JOANNE FULFORD

New job: director, engagement strategy, Rain43

Old job: director, media & engagement, Blammo Worldwide

Have you learned any lessons since starting your new role?

Never assume that people know what you do or what you are capable of. Also, "One Brief" (all departments) produces some amazing results. Departmental briefs force people to think vertically, while team briefs allow people to think horizontally.

What is the coolest thing about working with Rain 43?

Gourmet cupcakes on each employee's birthday is the first thing that comes to mind. Every day there are random dance parties, '80s song requests, pranks, candy platters and just general "fun breaks."



MARIA KENNEDY

New job: managing director and national design director, Grey Canada

Old job: founder and CD, Seed Ideas

What was your first order of business?

Good ideas can come from everyone, so we've now got two times a week that we meet casually to share ideas: Monday Morning Mash-up, where we present new innovations in the industry, and Freestyle Friday, where we gather to share strategies for clients.

Any plans for change?

New business, new colour, new space! My goal is to get us a space that tells our story and suits the way we work. Without giving you too much information, let's just say I have my eye on a few bucket list projects and clients.

A+OMIC

Oasis tricks out its juice boxes

By Jonathan Paul

Quebec-based A. Lassonde's Oasis brand is taking its juice box game to the next level, literally. It's turned a selection of its Tetra Pak cartons into game controllers for interactive online learning and play.

Through the magic of augmented reality, kids can use cartons of Oasis Classic, Oasis FruitZii and Oasis Fruits to play "Oasis All-Stars," an animated online soccer game that the brand launched this month.



An integrated marketing campaign developed by Draftfcb, including POS, web media and a microsite (Oasisoccer.com), has been promoting the game.

The juice box connects with the game via webcam thanks to AR tech by Augmented CPG that enables the camera to recognize the juice carton controller. Players can select from one of three game modes and act as a goalkeeper, deftly wielding the juice box to block shots from Nico (the brand-created soccer star) who interacts with the player throughout the game, reminding them to stay active and recycle juice cartons.

"While we have always looked for new ways to create engagement at store level, augmented reality enabled us to create interaction with the product itself," says Luc Prevost, VP marketing, A. Lassonde.

Q&A: SCOTT GOODSON'S UPRISING

By Emily Wexler

The expat Canadian founder of global agency StrawberryFrog – which has offices in Amsterdam, New York and Mumbai – spoke with *strategy* about his new book, *Uprising: How to Build a Brand and Change the World by Sparking Cultural Movements*, which has made a few hot lists, including *Newsweek*. In it, he explores why the power of the people is suddenly prominent in our society, and how marketers need to jump on board.

You write about the Age of Uprisings. Can you explain that, and how it relates to our industry?

Depending on what day it is, you're apt to find front-page stories of folks taking to the streets in Russia, Syria, Greece, India, you name it. Even in the U.S., we've seen the Occupy Wall Street movement.

Most people already know the story of how Invisible Children and the now-famous "Kony 2012" video sparked a movement that has rallied over 100 million people in just over a week. Putting aside the political aspects of this story to look at the marketing side of it, I have to wonder, how might this affect the way advertisers think about fundamental questions such as, what do we stand for? And who do we stand with?

If brands haven't fully answered those questions, they'd better.

Today, if you do something that ticks people off, they have the will and the passion and the social media tools to wreak havoc on your brand or organization. And it may be in response to something you haven't even done yourself – you may simply be associated, through advertising or some other form of support, with the offending party.

Unless the protesters are specifically targeting your business, it's natural to think, "This new era of protest makes for lively news, but has nothing to do with my company or brand."

Here's a bullhorn alert: the new social unrest is everybody's business, including yours and mine.

Uprisings can be a controversial topic. Do you expect backlash?

The book is about the new age we live in and potential to spark a movement that now lies within each of us. This is a scary thought for anyone in power. So, I can see



why some people wouldn't want *Uprising* to spread (I expect it to be banned in Syria).

Yet to me the bigger controversy is the thought that companies, and marketers in particular, can spark cultural movements. Aren't movements supposed to be about noble causes

and higher purposes – as opposed to selling stuff?

But I think movements, at least the kind that gather around positive, creative, dynamic ideas, can help build a better, fairer, more sustainable and interesting world. A movement can enable a company to form a stronger connection to the public. And yes, that certainly can translate into profit, though I think it can also have other effects that are less mercenary but no less important.

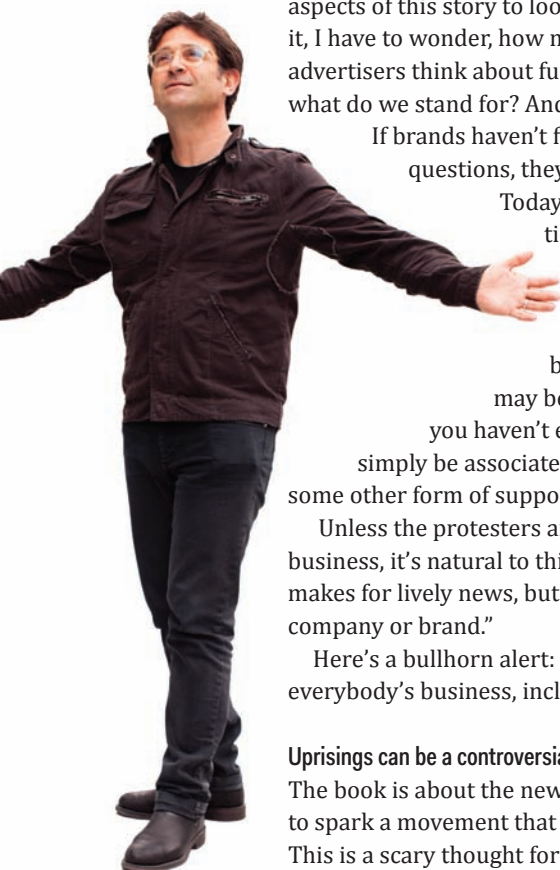
What should marketers take away from this?

I worry that the lesson they may take away from this is, "Stay away from outspoken people; don't get involved in any issues; play it safe." Trouble is, if you play it safe in today's marketing environment, you won't have crowds rising up against you – they'll be too busy ignoring you.

That's why I think, in these volatile times, brands need to develop movement strategies.

It starts with figuring out what your brand's core values are. What are you for? What are you against? Traditionally, marketers have been reluctant to take a stand against anything because it can feel controversial or divisive. But the truth is, some of the boldest marketers have been doing this kind of thing successfully for quite a while (think of Apple, which in its early days came out strongly against conformity and the "Big Brother" world of computing). And today, more than ever, consumers are looking for brands that share their values and outlook.

Uprising is about the world we are living in. It's about how you, an individual or a huge company, can spark a mass movement that accelerates your rise to dominance. 



Last year, Gustavo, one of our young marketers, told me that Cannes taught him one important lesson; that all this time he had been approving mediocre work. He knew that he needed to go back to his job and apply what he had learned. For me that moment was worth every penny of bringing people to Cannes.

Dana Anderson

Senior Vice-President, Marketing Strategy and Communications
Kraft Foods

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A NEW TAKE ON “SEX SELLS”

BY JONATHAN PAUL



AMOUR WANTS VIEWERS TO GO ALL THE WAY

In the real world, when a cop pulls you over for speeding, gratuitous roadside sex is not an alternative to a ticket. Community service is. People shouldn't be too discouraged, though, because “Fantasies happen, but only on Amour Adult TV.”

The pay-per-view channel, available through Manitoba-based MTS TV's Ultimate TV Service, is back with a new trio of TV ads that follow up on an effort developed by Dare in Vancouver last year aiming to encourage subscriptions to the Ultimate Service. It included a humorous string of spots featuring talentless-but-attractive actresses and the tagline “You won't watch for the acting.”

This latest iteration is more focused on encouraging existing MTS Ultimate customers to purchase Amour movies, setting it up as a place they can see fantasies stemming from everyday interactions play out.

On top of the cop/ticket scenario, one ad revolves around a dude who shows up to clean a dirty pool frequented by two bikini babes, but the pool ends up being the only thing he works on. The third features a pizza boy who makes a delivery to a woman clad only in a towel who has no cash to pay with. She pays with credit card. Humour is the way to go, says Rob Sweetman, ECD, Dare Vancouver, as it's the best way to defuse a sensitive topic like adult film.

“The biggest challenge was finding the right tone,” Sweetman says. “Adult entertainment can be offensive to some, so we wanted to strike the right balance. We tried to intrigue interested viewers without upsetting others.”

The ads are currently airing during late-night programming on MTS.

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☒ HEY, WHAT'S UP?



UNCOMPLICATE

ROLLING ROCK KEEPS IT SIMPLE

If simplicity is the ultimate sophistication, then Rolling Rock is one refined brew. The American brand, managed in Canada by Labatt, has released a poster campaign championing uncomplicated bar behaviour.

The effort, which targets urban males, is Rolling Rock's first Canadian campaign. It was developed by Red Urban in Toronto and differs from its advertising south of the border in that it's not about evoking its "Born Small Town" roots, says Steve Carli, president, Red Urban.

"We talked to consumers in Canada and they told us that behind the idea there are some rich ideals, but the tagline of 'Born Small Town' felt very American and didn't resonate," says Mike Bascom, national marketing manager, Alexander Keith's, Rolling Rock and domestic specialty portfolio, Labatt Breweries.

However, the Canadian campaign does indirectly channel small-town living. "We took the essence of the [Born Small Town] promise, but dramatized it in a way that didn't connote any of the potential negative associations – in essence, we uncomplicated the idea," says Bascom.

"We wanted to connect with consumers who, at times, are looking for a simpler path to having a good time," says Carli. "We want Rolling Rock to be part of a less complicated night out."

Where some beer ads feature guys meeting women using complex methods like, say, jetpacking into a party held at a top secret location, one piece of Rolling Rock creative offers the phrase "nice to meet you" as a simple alternative to the over-the-top pick-up line "Are you from Tennessee? Because you're the only ten I see."

Red Urban worked with Labatt, Mosaic and UM to develop the creative, which is appearing on transit ads, OOH, on premise, as well as in resto ads and wild postings, in Toronto, Vancouver and Montreal.

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The sweetest battleground

Some of the wackiest, most innovative advertising lately is coming from the candy industry. Is confectionery the new hotbed of creativity? In other words, is candy the new beer?

BY MEGAN HAYNES



A hidden link in this Skittles video directs users to a storybook starring the werewolf baby on a full moon.

Over the last few years, Caramilk ran its “Key to the Secret” campaign, Skittles launched “Touch the Rainbow” YouTube spots and M&M’s “Find Red” was the first-ever digital scavenger hunt. This year, Skittles gets a boost from mythical creatures, Cadbury created a real “Joy Department,” M&M’s debuted chief chocolate officer Ms. Brown (who has her own Twitter handle, and does interstitial commentary on hit shows), not to mention this is the year a consumer’s face will be literally turned into a candy for Maynards.

We’re in the thick of the candy renaissance, says Philippe Garneau, president and ECD, GWP Brand Engineers, thanks to a hyper-competitive market, cut

or fragmented budgets, and more creative content being shared on social media than ever before. So, confectionery marketers have had to step up by creating uber-creative content.

Garneau points to the 2008 Cannes Grand Prix winning Dairy Milk “Gorilla” campaign (featuring an ape pounding on drums to Phil Collins) as the catalyst for the creative shift from rational advertising to fun, silly and, most importantly, engaging creative, aimed at making people smile.

Despite concerns that the campaign may have been too abstract for viewers, the commercial led to increased sales and huge viral reach with many fan-created versions popping up on YouTube.

“Everyone knew what a Dairy Milk chocolate [bar] was,” says

Simon Creet, VP, CCO, The Hive, which works with Cadbury. “[And the marketers said], ‘We’re going to take a little leap and show people the benefit of the chocolate: pure joy. We’re not going to tell people Dairy Milk will give you joy – we’re just going to give you joy.’”

Once the success of the campaign became apparent, Creet says companies began shifting advertising strategies and got a bit braver.

“The brief used to say ‘Sell more (insert candy). Now it says ‘Surprise and delight the consumer,’” says Michelle Prowse, group account director, The Hive.

For example, Cadbury Dairy Milk’s latest venture is the Joy Department: a department created for the sole purpose of spreading joy through videos and

online posts. The spots currently airing have a room full of people engaged in a peanut butter-induced food fight, culminating in the new peanut butter and pretzel bar.

"It's a real, living, breathing division," says Ian MacKellar, CCO, Ogilvy, which created the campaign. "The sole purpose is to help spread joy through chocolate."

The recession further propelled the sea change to creative carte blanche. Once the economy started fluctuating, people looked to affordable luxuries to keep their moods up and the confectionery industry saw an increase in sales over the recessionary months.

Despite the increased sales and leeway, Prowse says budgets were likely cut as a result of the recession, or fragmented across different channels.

But MacKellar says this is a good thing. "You realize you have to do more with less. So you rely on creativity to set you apart from other brands."

And in the online space, creative needs to be share-worthy; otherwise it languishes in the cloud.

"Brands need to be as interesting as the culture they live in. Most of our consumers [are] constantly seeing new things and the craziest new internet memes," says Creet, "So

[with] candy, the only way to stay top of mind is to be as interesting as this other stuff that's going around."



With the immense success of last year's "Touch the Rainbow" campaign (market share rose in the double digits), ACDs Mike Donaghey and Chris Joakim, BBDO, knew they needed to up the creative ante.

At first, "Touch the Untouchable" looks like the old campaign with a new cast of characters. One spot has a small werewolf baby sitting in a rocking swing as the viewer's finger, placed on the screen, pokes the kid's stomach. Another spot has a princess rubbing her nose against it.

But delve deeper and consumers will find digital Easter eggs, links that remain hidden in the videos until users hover over them, leading to new content.

While the company seeded the videos to bloggers mid-March, the Easter eggs go live on April 2 and tell a story unto themselves. For example, the princess's egg brings viewers to her personalized photo shoot, where she sexily poses as she trims her toenails, while the werewolf baby video lands on a digital children's book with a macabre ending.

As brands compete for online love, more and more gamification of candy emerges.

Following the success of Caramilk's "The Key to the Secret" campaign, which doubled sales and brand equity with a Willy Wonka-inspired competition that hid keys in wrappers, The Hive launched a new scouring competition, this time online.

The online Easter egg hunt features a Cadbury Crème egg hidden in ads on different websites. As the user hovers over the ad, the cursor changes to some method of egg destruction (ninja blades or a guillotine, anyone?). Once the users

spot the egg, they goo it – or destroy it – and earn badges for a chance to win the ultimate Goo Grail, with back-end cookies tracking the users' progress. It's a low-maintenance way of engaging users and reviving the suicidal egg from 2008.

Social media has breathed life back into candy advertising, Garneau says. While it took a few years to figure out how to utilize social networks, confectionery marketers are now in the vanguard of leveraging the online space to tell interesting stories and engage users.

The industry is on the cusp of super-cool marketing as more brands dive in, hell bent on pure entertainment, says Garneau,



predicting it will trickle into the store aisles and onto packaging.

"I suspect we haven't seen the end of the shenanigans," he says. "The desire to entertain, to occupy that – forgive the pun – sweet spot has always been there, but marketers realized we're going to have to earn it." 

Clockwise from top:

Maynards turns a contest winner into candy; Cadbury Dairy Milk has given people "pure joy" since the original "Gorilla" campaign in 2008 and recently created its own Joy Department; M&M's new spokesperson, Ms. Brown (voiced by Vanessa Williams), was unveiled just in time for the 2012 Super Bowl.





BY JONATHAN PAUL

THE NEXT **KID** THING

Kids change fads faster than they change socks: think pogs or Tamagotchis. The only trend that's certain is that there will always be something new to divert the attention and imagination of young people, however fleetingly it holds sway. We asked a quartet of experts to name the next big things for kids



THE NEXT MEDIA THING: PARTICIPATORY CROSS-PLATFORM TV

Mark Bishop, co-CEO/executive producer, Marble Media

Keeping kids active and engaged is very important to parents, and the production of entertainment media needs to reflect this trend. The emergence of new platforms is turning the once-passive activity of watching TV into an interactive one.

Great examples of this are tablet applications designed to sync with video content, presenting kids with a second-screen experience. The cross-platform application created for *The Smurfs* movie did this very well. After fans sync their iPads to the Smurf-O-Vision app on *The Smurfs* Blu-ray, they can interact digitally with characters on their tablet, in sync with what's happening on the TV screen.

Another great example is what Xbox Kinect has planned for its *Sesame Street TV*, which is a hybrid television show and videogame where kids can interact with their favourite characters within the video content.

Interactivity in the world of kids media is advancing very quickly, and with new technology being introduced on a regular basis we'll be seeing a lot more cross-platform content pushing the limits of creativity.

1



THE NEXT GAMING THING: JUNIOR FRANCHISATION

Alexandre Amancio, co-CCO, Cossette Montreal (formerly of Ubisoft)

I believe the next kids' videogame phenomenon won't be a specific intellectual property, but rather a larger trend.

In fact, it's already started. Today's kids have access to a veritable torrent of information, which makes them more discerning than previous generations.

The entertainment industry has certainly taken notice and has consequently begun creating younger entry points for their popular brands...think young Bond or the Marvel Superhero Squad.

With the advent of online free-to-play games and the ever-growing market share of tablets, it's a recipe for success.

2

3



THE NEXT MUSIC THING: SOCIALLY SPAWNED STARDOM

James Milward, founder/executive producer, The Secret Location



With new points of access (Spotify, Rdio and YouTube), the ability to share and discover peer to peer (Soundtracking and Herd.fm), and platforms that enable fandom through simple and mobile creation of user-generated content (Tumblr and Twitter), the relationship between music, identity and youth continues to grow and expand.

The result: physical music sales decrease while the appetite for live music, merchandise and direct engagement with the artists continues to grow voraciously.

Interestingly, traditional drivers of audience and discovery are also more and more irrelevant, as tech moves faster and engages in more satisfying ways than radio play, mass marketing and region-based TV, like MuchMusic or MTV.

Look to social communities to spawn new transmedia properties (such as Moshi Monsters and now Moshi Music) and social and participatory TV gaining true traction when combined with YouTube distribution, breaking down regional barriers and producing acts like [boy band] One Direction. They sold out Toronto's ACC in just minutes and are now selling out live shows all over the world in less time, all based on a fan ecosystem created digitally from initial exposure on the U.K.'s *X Factor*.

4



THE NEXT GLOBAL FRANCHISE THING: SPIDEY REDUX

Lana Castleman, editor, *kidscreen*

Watch out! Here comes the Spider-Man – again.

When scouting for the biggest global kids franchise of 2012, most will cast glances no further than at the world's most famous (if only) web-slinger. Yep, Spider-Man.

Thanks to the upcoming film and brand reboot *The Amazing Spider-Man* from Sony and Marvel, Spidey should get just the boost he needs to make it back to the top of the bestselling toys lists from which he's been absent over the past few years.

It's been proven the Marvel character's performance is rather cyclical, but no one can beat Spider-Man in the retail aisle during a movie year.

That said, the huge windfalls of yore are no sure thing given that kids entertainment-driven properties compete in a much more crowded landscape – witness the quick rise and fall of Spin Master's Bakugan and Warner Bros.' repeated, unsuccessful attempts to light a fire under the Green Lantern franchise.

Film and TV entertainment, arguably, isn't the only way to drive a franchise anymore, especially with that all-important boys six-to-11 demo. The impact of burgeoning digital gaming franchises like Angry Birds and Fruit Ninja is just starting to register. Retailers are beginning to test the waters with products based on these non-traditional properties, and guess what? The kids are buying.

Will one of them reach multi-billion-dollar franchise status this year? Most likely not. But kids are platform agnostic, they don't care where they find their heroes – be it on the big screen or their iPod Touch.



YOUTH MARKETING THAT POPS

BY MELINDA MATTOS

As Coca-Cola cranks up the volume on Covers and bows “Move to the Beat,” *strategy* talks to Canadian president Nicola Kettlitz about how the brand is engaging teens through music and social media

Coca-Cola isn't a particularly useful beverage. It won't make you run faster, or fulfill your recommended daily intake of vitamins and minerals. It's not likely to impress any of your hipster friends, either.

What it does provide, says Coca-Cola Canada president Nicola Kettlitz, is a simple moment of happiness. That's a message that should resonate with youth more than anyone, and to ensure that it does, the brand has been strategically embedding itself deep within teens' passions, like music and social media, through a combination of local and global programs.

“There's such a [youth] movement towards creation of material and sharing it online,” Kettlitz says. “Our own marketing needs to reflect that and allow teens to express themselves and connect with the brand in different ways.”

Judging by Coca-Cola Covers, it's working. Created in partnership with

MuchMusic and UM Canada in Toronto, Covers invites teens to record videos of themselves performing cover versions of pop songs and then upload them to a microsite to be rated by peers.

Last spring's inaugural Covers program generated a bigger response than either Coca-Cola or MuchMusic anticipated, with 1,200 videos uploaded, 52 hours of content created, 330,000 unique visitors and a total of two million page views. The average visitor spent six to seven minutes on the competition's microsite. It's results like this that helped earn the program a Gold award for Brand Integration at *strategy*'s 2011 AToMiC Awards.

“When we started Covers – and not to claim responsibility for it, because I wasn't here – it was kind of like an experiment,” says Kettlitz, who took on the role of Canadian president in April 2011, after two decades working for Coca-Cola in Italy, the U.S. and Canada. “We really didn't know how big it was going to be

or whether it was going to work. But it blew away every measurement we put to the program, and was so successful we decided to repeat it.”

“I don't think any of us realized that we would get more than singers,” adds Trevor Bozyk, CD, UM Canada. “[These teens] are also composers and musicians. Many of them harness technology to produce amazing work and melodies. Because of this, the web of music became much more vast, providing a larger source of content for fans to support and rally behind.”

For its second season, which kicked off in late-February and runs until June, Coca-Cola has pumped up the volume on its promotion and prizing.

Similar to last year's competition, the top three finalists will be whisked away to Toronto for the MuchMusic Video Awards in June, where the grand prize winner will receive the Covers Award and be profiled in a 60-second broadcast vignette. Each finalist will also star in their own individual commercial.

Above: 2011

Covers winner
Danyka Nadeau.

Opposite page:

DJ Mark Ronson
anchors Coke's new
Olympic campaign.

YOU CAN TAKE THE OLD, TRADITIONAL MARKETING MANUAL, THROW IT OUT THE WINDOW AND START AGAIN

But this year's winner will also have his or her song recorded and distributed online as a digital single, and will get to make a music video fully funded by MuchFACT.

"Ultimately what we'd love for this program to do is provide the teens that participate with a platform with which to show their talent, [helping them perhaps] make a career out of it and have some fun," Kettlitz says.

The new prizes mean the winner will walk away with pro-quality materials they could send to a producer or record label – a tempting prospect for all those Justin Bieber wannabes out there.

This year's program will also target young adults aged 13 to 24 with more editorial-style content than last year, says Bozyk, including tie-ins with MuchMusic shows like *New.Music.Live*.

Reflecting back on the first year of Covers, Bozyk says the big appeal was how accessible it was.

"Youth can audition directly from their bedrooms, anywhere in Canada," he says. "The entire platform and property centres online – not surprisingly the place where they consume and share massive amounts of content with their friends, as well as express themselves and their individuality through social channels."

He adds, "Throughout all of this, it's local. This isn't an untouchable program beyond our borders. Covers is designed for Canadian teens – giving them the

opportunity to shape, share and define the content and the experience."

Kettlitz agrees. "Covers was a proof point that any program where you allow the consumers to interact with the brand [and] create the content themselves is going to be successful," he says.

"The beauty of it is you get some incredibly creative output, and because of the connectivity of teens, it travels really fast around Canada and around the world."

Although it's impossible to isolate the

and Coca-Cola Zero) saw positive growth in terms of both value and volume share in Canada.

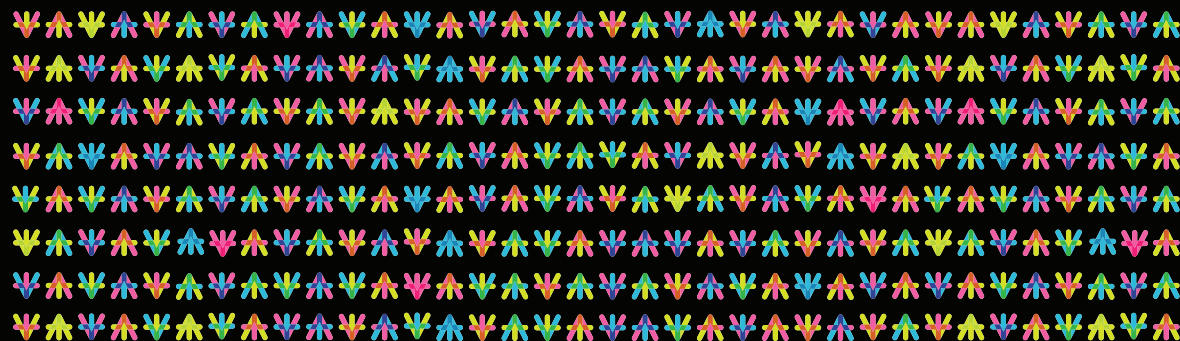
"Is it this program that's doing it?" he asks. "This program is contributing to it, but it's the whole mix. We give moms choices, we put calorie measurements on the front of packages, we support active living, we support the environment [through] Arctic Home and the polar bear program, so all of that adds up to success."



effect that Covers has had on Canadian sales, Kettlitz says "every brand score around Coca-Cola, with teens in particular, has been moving in the right direction ever since."

After several stagnant years, Coca-Cola (that is, the non-diet, non-calorie-reduced original recipe) started growing again last year, Kettlitz says. Nielsen reports that in the year prior to Jan. 28, 2012, Coca-Cola Trademark brands (Coca-Cola, Diet Coke

The brand certainly isn't hurting for engaging advertising and innovative media programs. Last month, The Gunn Report for Media named Coca-Cola its global advertiser of 2011, based on campaign wins at 14 different festivals around the world. With 62 points, the beverage brand had double the score of second-place winner Volkswagen and third-place winner McDonald's.



SOCIAL MEDIA STARTS HERE

THURSDAY/APRIL 19, 2012/TVDAY.CA
BROUGHT TO YOU BY THE TELEVISION BUREAU OF CANADA



Tying in neatly with Coca-Cola's mission of creating moments of happiness and optimism, music has been a key driver behind many of the brand's recent campaigns, both in Canada and abroad. And that won't be changing anytime soon.

"Music is a huge passion point for teens," says Kettlitz, who happens to have a teen daughter himself. "It's how they talk, it's how they connect, it's how they live."

This spring, Coca-Cola Canada relaunched a partnership with Apple's iTunes, originally introduced last year, wherein anyone who buys a 591 ml bottle of Coke receives a free song download. ("That's as good a program from a teen perspective as they come," remarks Kettlitz.)

But Coca-Cola isn't just helping teens acquire music – it's also helping create it through "Move to the Beat," a global campaign for the London 2012 Summer Olympics that's combining music with athletics in an unexpected way.

Grammy-winning British producer/DJ Mark Ronson was enlisted to create an anthem fusing the sound of London's music scene (including vocals by chart-topping singer Katy B) with the unique rhythms of Olympic athletes in motion.

For the track, titled "Anywhere in the World," Ronson recorded Olympians around the globe, from the plunk of



17-year-old Singaporean archer Dayyan Jaffar launching an arrow, to the footsteps of 24-year-old Russian sprinter Kseniya Vdovina speeding to the finish line.

A feature-length documentary about the project is currently in the works, with the song itself scheduled for release to radio stations and iTunes in May.

"You'll be able to download the song, but you'll also see some evolutions where we'll ask teens to generate their own beats," says Kettlitz, who adds that Canadian adaptations will be unveiled closer to the Olympics.

The aforementioned athletes will act as global ambassadors for the campaign, appearing in advertising, digital and mobile apps along with three other project participants (table tennis player Darius Knight from Great Britain, 110 m hurdler David Oliver from the U.S. and taekwondo competitor Maria Espinoza from Mexico).

Ronson and Katy B's song will be used

in TV commercials, mobile and digital platforms, as well as at Coca-Cola events during the Games. In other words, Coke is going all out to ensure this is the song teens have stuck in their heads all summer.

Although teenagers aren't necessarily Coca-Cola's biggest demo in terms of consumption, Kettlitz says it's a strategically important group, and one they'll continue to target long after the Olympics and Covers are over.

"The brand is very much a teen brand [and] they deserve a special focus," he says. "When you're a teen is when you start interacting with Coca-Cola, and once you start, we know you will keep interacting with the brand throughout the course of a lifetime. That interaction will change in nature as you age – the frequency might change, you might switch to Coke Zero or Diet Coke – but teens are the next generation of Coke lovers."

And, as he's learned during his first year as president, running a successful youth campaign means meeting young people where they live and play.

"You need to think about how teens live today, how they connect, how their life is structured or not structured, and what their passion points are," he says. "You can take the old, traditional marketing manual, throw it out the window and start again."



CATCHING UP WITH KETTLITZ

What does Coca-Cola Canada president Nicola Kettlitz worry about when he isn't talking teens? We grilled him on the state of the Canadian business, and his first year on the job

You took the helm of Coca-Cola Canada in April 2011.

How would you describe your first year on the job?

Exhilarating, frustrating. Frustrating in the sense that – and maybe this is just my impatience – we don't seem to move fast enough on some things that we know we have to do. Anyone who works with me would attest to my frustration with that and my constant sense of urgency. But really, exhilarating, fun and learning are the best three words.

Where does Coca-Cola Canada stand in terms of the global business?

The Canadian business has done very well over the last few years. [Original recipe] Coca-Cola has done very well, where it is back in growth – I say back in growth because it didn't grow for a number of years. We're gaining share both

in terms of volume (litres) and value (dollars).

Coke Canada is a top 20 business in the world, so it's an important market. It's not huge, but it's big. We're showing that you can grow in a developed market.

What do you think is behind this growth?

Part of the reason is that we're doing the right things for the brand again. Maybe for a few years we forgot what that was. But now we're marketing it properly, we're marketing to the core of what it is, the basic essence of what our brand is about, and we're also doing it very responsibly. At the end of the day, there is no successful long-term business plan that doesn't take into account the communities [and] cultures in which we operate, and we began to realize that and adapt it.



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ANATOMY

OF A YOUTH FAN

BY MEGAN HAYNES



Youth are fickle, fickle creatures.

That is our 100%, totally scientific, completely accurate opinion. Their loyalties are always shifting.

So how can brands tap into that? By creating emotional ties, and treating youth as individuals – not mass markets – brands are finding ways to earn loyalty that sticks.

Read on to learn how some brands, like HP and Virgin, are reaching youth on a more personal and emotional level. And since building a fan base is a common goal, we look at how two up-and-coming musical artists, Lights and Hollerado, are going grassroots to build a following.

Also check out the wicked (cool? Awesome? Sick? What are the kids saying these days?) infographic for the latest dirt on youth loyalty, from *strategy*'s survey done by Mike Farrell, SVP research and strategic insight at Toronto-based research and marketing consultancy Conversion, with student discount provider SPC Card.

Youth by the numbers

Strategy enlisted the help of Toronto-based research and marketing consultancy Conversion and student discount card provider SPC Card to get a better understanding of youth today – who do they love and why? They polled more than 500 teens and young adults, ages 14 to 24, across Canada. Here are the findings, rendered in everyone's favourite infographic style by designer Sandra Tavares.

CANADA
IS HOME TO OVER
10
MILLION
YOUTH UNDER 24
WITH ALMOST HALF OVER 14
THEY EARN
\$50
BILLION
OF COMBINED INCOME
BASED ON RECENT STATS FROM STATSCAN

BRANDS YOUTH LOVE

Canadian brands 


AMERICAN EAGLE
OUTFITTERS

Bench.

H&M



FOREVER 21

lululemon  **athletica**

GARAGE

TNA 

Arizia

d dynamite

MUSIC YOUTH LOVE

Adele



Taylor Swift



Rihanna



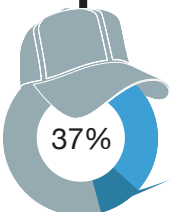
Coldplay



Eminem

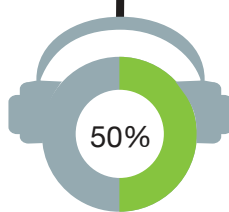


YOUTH MAKE UNIQUE CHOICES
many picked music and brands
no one else chose



BRANDS

jumps to 46% of
18- to 24-year-olds



MUSIC

HOW YOUTH DESCRIBE THEIR FAVOURITES



Comfortable
Fashionable Stylish High quality
Fun Athletic Active



Awesome!
Amazing! Rock
Fun Good★Great
Unique

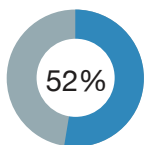
“ The top attributes associated with brands are, I'll just say it, **bo-o-o-ring**. So pragmatic. ‘**Comfortable**’ is number one? **WTF!** [Youth] are playing it safe. This is an opportunity [for brands] to change things up. Brands need to look to the music. Are you **awesome** or **amazing**? Are you **unique** or **inspirational**?

Mike Farrell, SVP
research and insight, Conversion

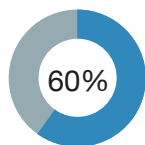
HOW YOUTH BUY

“ I like to follow trends ”
66% **disagreed** with this statement

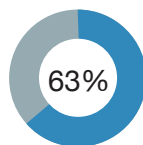
almost half of youth are
loyal to their favourite brand



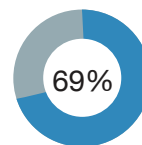
seek out
stores that carry
unique products



buy if the brand
stands for something
they believe in



think *too much*
importance is placed
on brand names



never use an online
source to keep on
top of trends

WHAT YOUTH HATE

58.5% too high a price

45.7% poor quality

38.2% poor customer service

22.6% brands that do or make things that are bad for the environment

16.4% being talked down to

14.7% tasteless or annoying ads

14.3% brands that do or make things that are bad for my health

13.8% aggressive selling or marketing to me personally

13.8% brands that try too hard to be cool

10.9% brands that are too common or popular



BUILDING LOYALTY WITH YOUTH

What do HP, Virgin Mobile and Red Bull have in common? By letting youth customize how they want to engage, they're winning true fans



© Red Bull Media House

On the surface, youth are tough nuts to crack. As a result of growing up in a recession-filled, post-9/11, Occupy world, youth are distrustful of brands and companies, cautious and pragmatic, and uncertain about their economic future. Jim Sullivan, a partner at Colloquy, a research company that specializes in loyalty and has been studying youth and measuring benchmark data for the past 10 years, confirms that youth say they aren't loyal and that they push back against traditional marketing.

Youth have become pragmatic, says Sullivan, and the distrust of businesses and their overall economic uncertainty leads to penny-pinching kids who are more preoccupied with saving money than spending it. *Strategy's* own survey, done by Toronto-based Conversion, a market research firm, and SPC Card, a student discount provider, found the number one driver for loyalty was low prices – the cheapest brand wins among youth. Thrift

aside, like any other demo, what they say and what they do vary.

Youth are loyal – they repeatedly eat the same cereal and use the same hygiene products, says Sullivan. Youth want to belong to a group but also be seen as an individual within it. Since they're wary of being viewed as slaves to brands, the age-old goal of influencing our non-rational consumption choices is paramount, in tandem with creating emotional ties, and treating youth as the individuals they want to be. Sullivan says that companies using social media, for example, can cost-effectively treat audiences as individuals rather than a mass market, pointing to Seattle-based (but Canadian-founded) Jones Soda, which allows consumers to create their own labels and mixes, as a good example of individual marketing. (Its website prominently declares "Even a good dictionary can't define who you are.")

Tailoring programs doesn't mean making individual marketing plans for every single one of the more than 10 million kids in

Canada, says Dave Wilkin, the 24-year-old president and founder of Redwood Strategic, a youth-only marketing firm. He points to Virgin Mobile's member's benefits program as a prime example of a brand letting youth tailor their own engagement with the company.

Knowing that youth tend to want more than just discounts on products they already buy, Virgin Mobile created a reward program focused on four key passion points: travel, fashion, entertainment and music (none of which have to do with discounts on phone plans), says Andrew Bridge, managing director, Virgin Mobile.

Virgin subscribers, for example, can get traditional benefits such as early access to concert or movie tickets, and discounts at retailers like H&M and the Body Shop, says Bridge, but the brand also dishes out exclusive perks, such as high-end, members-only porta-potties at outdoor events. The entire system is based on listening to what members want and letting them choose what to take

advantage of, he says. In other words, members make their own reward programs.

The redemption rate for the benefits is in the hundreds of thousands, with many customers saying they'll stay on board because of the program.

Further, based on their research, customers who take advantage of the membership benefits will tell 14 other people about the program, referring friends and family to Virgin.

This is important, according to Wilkin, who says 70% of Canadian youth look to these referrals when it comes to making decisions on purchases. He adds that brands should also consider giving creative control to youth and see what they come up with to promote the brand.

To that end, HP sought out brand ambassadors at five campuses across Canada to lead local program activation, says Michael McAvoy, director, marketing, HP Canada. While HP's main thrust is sponsored events focused on music and sports,

HP computers, weekly task lists and their imagination, says Andrew Au, president, Campus Intercept. How they engage students is up to the ambassadors – they have autonomy. As a result, programs at York University are very different from the ones at University of Waterloo, says McAvoy.

Ambassadors have orchestrated everything from wild dance parties in the university common areas to scavenger hunts around campus, engaging youth with the products in newer, less marketed and, most importantly, fun ways. As a result, when it comes time to replace an old computer, which usually happens in third and fourth year, HP is top of mind.

Addressing the fact that youth have unique micro-niches, Red Bull is another brand with a strategy for reaching far beyond the mainstream music and sport sponsorship menu.

"[Red Bull does] a little bit of advertising here and there, but their program is anchored in a collection of

events and happenings that connect with youth-related subcultures," says Vito Piazza, managing partner and VP, Sid Lee, Red Bull's creative agency.

Working with the philosophy of giving people wings, Red Bull aims to support youth at all levels, from professional to amateur, says Lubor Keliar, director of communication, Red Bull Canada. It's been a successful approach: Red Bull is considered the leader in the energy drink market and its presence is widespread on university campuses across the country.

The company focuses all of its events around music, arts and sports, says Piazza, adding that everything skews towards experiential-based programming.

It hosts events large and small, from the big-draw Crashed Ice festival, a Montreal-based extreme ice skating tournament that draws millions, to smaller events that draw only a couple hundred, such as a movie festival for skiing enthusiasts or bike-riding festival for fixed-gear (fixie) cyclists only. He adds that Red Bull gives youth the spotlight, helps them to be part of a greater movement, and have their voices heard. By supporting smaller niche cultures, such as free skiers or fixie enthusiasts, Red Bull celebrates the subcultures often ignored by other brands.

"[Youth] want to express their uniqueness through brands," says Colloquy's Sullivan. "They want to be able to identify with certain brands. The reasons why music groups are so avidly followed by fans is because the consumer has literally adopted them as a shorthand for what they stand for [and] who they are. Brands have to engage at an emotional level, which is where true loyalty resides."



Above HP hosts a breakdancing circle at York University.
Below right Virgin offers Body Shop makeovers in Toronto.
Opposite page Red Bull's Crashed Ice draws millions.

the reasoning behind the ambassadors is simple: students will know how to engage their friends and classmates better than any marketing agency could – they have a finger on the pulse of campus life, says McAvoy.

With the help of Toronto-based youth marketing firm Campus Intercept, HP picks students and trains them in the overall objectives of the company – what features the company wants highlighted, what products it wants promoted, and overall financial goals.

Then the students are let loose, armed with



BATTLE OF THE BANDS

Want to know how to turn young consumers into fans of your brand? Take a cue from their favourite musical acts, who are building impressive fan bases through grassroots initiatives, social engagement and DIY approaches

HOLLERADO



Hollerado, a Juno award-winning indie-rock band from Manotick, ON., is possibly one of the most innovative bands currently on the market, says Kieran Roy, general manager, Arts & Crafts, its managing label.

The musicians have a strong DIY aesthetic, something youth can emulate. For example, when the band received a new tour van, they invited fans to come spray paint the new wheels.

Their first album, aptly titled *Record in a Bag* was literally thrown into Ziplock bags and sold in stores, with extras, like downloadable content vouchers, contest entries and stickers. "It's a Cracker Jack box approach to music," says Roy. "[The marketing is] fun, it's playful and younger audiences think it's something they could aspire to do – it doesn't feel out of reach."

Youth will gravitate towards Hollerado because they can see themselves in the band, says loyalty and youth expert Sean Claessen, VP strategy and creative, Maritz Canada, a loyalty consultancy, and former CD at Youthography, a youth-oriented research and marketing agency. This is a band that has risen because it put in the elbow grease and now it's paying off, he says. Youth see that and think one day they can do it too.

"There is an honesty and transparency that's probably more

relatable than traditional marketing," Claessen says, suggesting brands consider less highly polished marketing campaigns. "Don't hesitate to show your audience things you're trying," he says. "Don't worry about letting the effort show. With young people, you may in fact earn more respect and credibility by being very upfront that you're trying this new thing."

Hollerado isn't afraid to try new things – often with creative and entertaining results. With 1.8 million views on their YouTube channel, the band's innovative approach to videos has garnered international attention (the latest video has the band members racing around on ostriches), but directly engaging fans is what keeps them coming back, says Roy. For example, he points to the band's "Meet the Mayors" tour, which sent the boys across the country asking mayors questions their fans tweeted in.

"I think youth feel disconnected to the political process [and that] their voice isn't heard," says Roy. "[Meeting the mayors] didn't make a song sound any better, but it breeds loyalty [because] Hollerado said, 'No. Our voice is important.'"

As youth often feel their voices are ignored, there are certainly more brands giving them platforms, like P&G's Secret did with its "Mean Stink" anti-bullying campaign, opening a dialogue for youth to talk about the subject on Facebook.

LIGHTS



Lights (born Valerie Poxleitner) hit the stage in 2008 with her synth-pop sound and an already-strong social media presence. Since then, her popularity has built through word of mouth.

"The most interesting part of Lights is that, the audience she has – 800,000 Facebook fans, [350,000] Twitter followers, sold-out shows across North America – is happening in the absence of any major radio or video play," says Jian Ghomeshi, well-known CBC radio personality and Lights' manager.

Limited radio play means fans tend to have a stronger affinity for the singer than the typical pop-star-du-jour. "There's a proprietary sense the fans have because they haven't been force-fed her, they've discovered her."

Sean Claessen of Maritz says that youth take pride in being the first to discover something new or cool, so they want to share it. "There's a different weight when your best friend turns to you and says 'OMG. Have you heard this?'" he says.

But that's half the battle. Once discovered, fame needs to be sustained as the demo ages. Ghomeshi says he didn't want Lights to be

pigeonholed as a teen pop sensation, relying on fickle youth taste to sustain success, so they've turned down overly youth-focused publications, opting instead for features in *Rolling Stone*, *Spin* and more indie-music publications, which, he says, prevents alienating any audiences.

"There've been a lot of situations with major labels, where [they say] 'Let's put her here,' and I say no and they thought I was crazy," he says. "If [people] see that artist is for kids, it doesn't matter how good she is, they'll put her in that silo."

It's an age-old dilemma for younger-skewing brands. Barbie has combated similar concerns, and recent marketing efforts have worked hard to position the iconic brand as more contemporary and less kiddy, such as the recent Barbie and Ken reunion campaign, positioning the dolls as a troubled celeb break-up story.

Claessen says this is a smart marketing tactic to reaching youth who aspire to be older. So being treated as an equal member of the audience ("I love Lights, and happen to be 14," instead of "I'm 14 and love Lights") will give the singer, and brands that follow similar paths, both loyalty and longevity among an ever-aging group.



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Generation tech demands digi-retail

From social networking to augmented reality, kids have an unprecedented level of digital know-how, and they're demanding the same of retailers. Here's how a few brands are answering the call

BY JONATHAN PAUL

Teens and young adults are like cyborgs considering how much they use technology, particularly the 18- to 24-year-old demo, and they want their consumer experience to reflect their digital lifestyle.

A recent study conducted by Toronto-based Conversion, in partnership with client SPC Card indicated that most youth – over 50% – believe retailers could use more tech in-store to make the experience richer, giving more information, detail and perspective on products.

“The Pulse of the Canadian Student Shopper,” leveraging SPC Card’s 1.1 million teen and

young adult members, indicates that we’re headed for a retail ecosystem where purchase decisions will be increasingly made through digital touchpoints, based on the large role that digital and mobile platforms now play in youth’s day-to-day lives, as well as their interactions with brands through those platforms.

Here are some telling stats: 56% of Canadian students use or own a smartphone; over a third follow a brand online via social media, more than celebrities and athletes; 57% have downloaded at least one retailer app; 27% have downloaded a store locator app; and 35% have shared photos of

clothing, shoes or accessories they want to buy via social media.

New Canadian clothing brand 3F has really taken the idea of tech investment to heart. It recently opened up its first location, a flagship store at Yonge-Dundas Square in Toronto, with plans to open 33 more in three years. Working with its Toronto-based AOR Intercept Group, 3F plans over the next few months to outfit the Toronto location with all sorts of *Minority Report*-type tech to capture kids’ attention, including augmented reality, image recognition, gesture control and even thought-controlled computing.

Canadian retailer 3F is introducing in-store brainwave-controlled computing to help teens choose outfits.

That's right: this brand will allow its young shoppers the opportunity to put together the perfect outfit based on their brainwaves.

The tech will determine the shopper's fashion state of mind by assessing whether their brainwaves fall into one of two categories: focused or relaxed. That data is then fed through a computer that generates different style choices for the customer. The AR, gesture and image recognition tech will also be put towards helping the shopper divine the ultimate ensemble.

3F's use of such tech helps to differentiate it from competitors like H&M, says Andrew Au, president, Intercept Group. But not all of the stores will be similarly equipped. Those outfitted to resemble the

traditional, one-dimensional ROI model, investing in new technology doesn't score well, but brands need to ask themselves what it's worth to have your target market look at your brand and say, 'They get it. They're constantly innovating.' It's the same fundamentals of a halo strategy. Companies that 'get it' will win in the long run. Retailers that choose not to innovate will be left behind."

3F's enterprising attitude isn't limited to cutting-edge technology. It also extends to the social media realm, which it leverages to convey that customers are partners in the brand. For example, 3F is using Facebook to invite customers to apply to become members of the brand's board of directors. As the brand expands to more markets it will establish a board of directors in each one. The goal is to be able to develop insight-driven campaigns, and market-specific BODs will help 3F to localize those insights.

The brand also plans on experimenting with emerging micro-social network Pinterest by posting pics of its clothing that will drive e-commerce. 3F will encourage its customers to create their own Pinterest boards and, of course, 3F has established a Twitter presence.

Canadian Tire also recently married social media and technology to reach out to its more youthful customers and drive new traffic to its Facebook page. During the holiday season, working with Tribal DDB and Moment Factory, it set up a 30-foot "Spirit Tree" in Toronto's Union station. The tree captured, in real time, messages sent via blog, tweet, Facebook and other online content that contained Christmas keywords, which were converted into data and visualized by 3,000 LED lights on the tree. The brightness of the lights was determined by the total number of



per-minute messages being shared across the country. The experience was live-streamed over the website and generated 280,470 mentions of Christmas spirit between Dec. 12 and 27.

Rosie Riolino-Serpa, AVP, online marketing, Canadian Tire, says that the tree gave her brand a good boost in terms of driving young people to its Facebook page. It currently has close to 300,000 fans.

"We went out saying it's not a product, it's not a push, it's not something you could buy, it's more just 'spread your Christmas cheer with your friends and family across Canada' and that's where I think we gained a lot of respect [with people saying] 'wow they're the first to do this - they're very tech-savvy,'" she says.

The centrepiece of Canadian Tire's youth-oriented tech strategy, says Riolino-Serpa, is the Canadian Tire iPhone app, which enables UPC scanning. Users can find enhanced product content like videos, rates and reviews in-store on their phone, and a Facebook component is baked in so they can share with their friends, or ask them if they would recommend a product. It also gives access to a digitally enhanced version of the Canadian Tire weekly flier. At press time it had been downloaded approximately one million times.

The brand has used the mobile app to do targeted "tech testing"



Above Canadian Tire's iPhone app enables UPC scanning. **Top right** 3F integrates screens into stores.

inside of Philip K. Dick's brain will be restricted based on factors including budget and market.

"Very few retailers are investing in new technology to enhance the in-store experience," says Au. "For most, their e-commerce strategy takes precedence. Under the



A plum-dropping game on Facebook is just one way Indigo has been engaging consumers online.

in areas where it is more focused on the younger demographic, like Waterloo, ON., where it presented users with an exclusive sharable gas coupon. It found that one particular student shared the coupon with 92 of his friends, 67 of whom converted it.

“What we’re seeing from that test is that Canadian Tire has a huge opportunity in the area of digital offering and social sharing,” says Riolino-Serpa. “We want the market to be meaningful and engaging to our younger customers through those channels of their choice.”

She says the company is also exploring the use of QR codes to bridge the gap between digital and brick and mortar stores, possibly through mobile commerce sometime in the future. Because of the flexibility it provides, mobile is Canadian Tire’s focus, says Riolino-Serpa, but she adds that there’s also a three-year plan in place to enhance in-store tech.

“[We want to be] consistent with the same content across all of the

customers’ touchpoints – when you go into the store there’s a kiosk that accepts payment information, or there’s digital signage in the store that enhances the information, but may be more personalized when you go and see it, touch it or play with it,” she says. “So, we are looking at different ways to improve the in-store experience. How do we put technology at the end of the aisles? How do customers have more control in their hands within our stores?”

Kiosks are one prong of a technology strategy being employed by Indigo, which aims to make both its in-store and online experience more compelling.

An in-store look-up-and-buy tool, the kiosks are being enhanced to provide customers, particularly Plum Rewards members, with personalized offers and experiences delivered with a swipe of their cards, says Anne Baston, VP marketing, digital, Indigo Books & Music.

She adds that the brand is also leveraging its kiosks for experiential content like video, including book trailers and other assets.

Indigo has also been merging Twitter with the in-store experience, creating hashtags around relevant in-store content and putting them on in-store signage so customers can engage on the spot. For example, the chain recently featured a “Best of 2011” table. Customers could provide feedback on Twitter using the hashtag #bestof2011, sharing their 2011 “best ofs” and see what other Indigo customers were saying.

“We’ll absolutely go deeper into things like hashtag strategies and QR codes,” says Baston. “As we develop more and more video assets, the ability for people to easily scan a QR code and then delve right into that content directly in the store will be a big piece.

“Obviously people being able to find content, store locations and

the assets that they’re looking for directly on their mobile device is a big piece of that as well,” she says. “You’ll see that coming out shortly, both across tablet [and] mobile. As part of our mobile strategy we’re looking at ways of making that experience even more digital whether it be a specific Plum loyalty app, or integrated into a larger Indigo mobile app. The ability to see points and serve up recommendations, those are absolutely things we’re looking at.”

The free Wi-Fi Indigo boasts in all of its stores will help with its mobile efforts.

In the meantime, it plans on furthering its social agenda, investigating platforms it has yet to explore, like Pinterest and Tumblr, and continuing to build out the ones it already leverages well: YouTube, where it has content including author and product demo vids; its Indigo blog that launched a year ago and now features up to 20 regular bloggers; and, of course, Facebook, where it’s housed a couple of extremely successful Indigo endeavours including a “bookshelf creator” contest. Customers could go into an Indigo store and customize their own bookshelf, its look and the featured products, some of which could be unlocked via Facebook by encouraging friends to “like” them to unlock them.

“[Our youth strategy] is really around experiences and engagement, making the connections and speaking to customers in their medium of choice, and creating communities around topics that people find interesting,” says Baston. 



RETHINKING RETAIL MARKETING

**How smart marketing tactics
can help retailers boost sales in
a tough market**

Today's consumers are savvier than ever, thanks to the wealth of information available at their fingertips 24/7. From browsing flyers and newspaper ads to group buying websites and mobile alerts, consumers are doing their homework before hitting the stores.

While this can undeniably complicate advertising for retailers, it can also present unprecedented opportunities. Retailers can augment their flyer and print efforts with digital tactics that amplify traditional campaigns, connect with a broader audience, and ultimately drive store traffic and boost sales.

Of course, navigating this longer and more complex path to purchase isn't easy. But the rewards can be significant for retailers who get it right. That's why more and more retailers are turning to knowledgeable industry partners like Quebecor Media, Aimia, Metroland Media and Postmedia Network for valuable guidance, insights and competitive advantages.

Quebecor Media

Quebecor Media is a full-service media solutions company that is well-equipped to help Canadian retailers maximize their marketing efforts. Quebecor Media's sales reps can work closely with advertisers to create customized media solutions that are best suited for their specific strategic objectives and budget.

The company has an exceptional footprint, with the ability to target 6.7 million Canadian households, representing over half of the country's entire market. It achieves this through its print and distribution network as well as daily, community and commuter newspapers, magazines and television, and its electronic and online properties. Quebecor Media can help retailers build customized campaigns that integrate all of these channels, going well beyond a simple insert or ROP campaign.

Quebecor Media has invested \$250 million dollars in a state-of-the-art printing platform to produce retail inserts alongside its newspapers, driving incredible time and cost efficiencies for advertisers. Its distribution channels like Le Sac Plus in Quebec and other community publications throughout English Canada can provide targeted solutions that create further costs savings for clients.

Advertisers looking to augment their digital presence can leverage Nurun, a Quebecor Media company. Nurun is a world-class agency specializing in interactive media and digital technologies that transform brand communications into solutions for consumers through digital utility. It can help advertisers navigate social media executions or even build new websites from scratch.

With coast-to-coast coverage at both national and local levels across multiple channels, Quebecor Media prides itself on its ability to reach any audience with precision.



"We can be very targeted at a regional level as well. Shoppers' habits are very different across Canada," adds John Querques, Quebecor Media's VP of distribution. "It gives us a lot of agility." That agility extends online, too. Each email address Quebecor Media has is linked to a six-digit postal code as well as demographic information, so advertisers could potentially hone in on women living in a particular neighbourhood with an email marketing campaign.

Loyalty programs can be a great way for retailers to deliver relevant communications with their best customers on an ongoing basis and influence their purchase decisions early on. "Technology definitely facilitates this desire or requirement to be where customers are when they make buying decisions," says Dawn Abankwah, Principal Consultant at the global loyalty marketing firm Aimia. "That all ties back to putting loyalty at the beginning of the purchase path, rather than at the end."

Lisa Orpen, director, marketing and corporate sales at Mississauga, Ont.-based Metroland Media, emphasizes that no matter what the medium is, targeting is a marketer's most valuable tool. "Whether it's driving foot traffic with traditional flyers utilizing their sophisticated analytics, providing mass or targeted online distribution of their flyers or other advertising offers, driving online traffic to their e-com stores or providing their stores with location-based mobile offers and daily deals for lead generation, the key is delivering targeted, relevant audiences across a variety of mediums," she says.

Another effective way to resonate with relevant audiences is by delivering your messaging through trusted local properties. "If you have that level of pride and engagement with the community like Postmedia does,

Targeting Along the Path to Purchase

Upon first glance, flyers may appear to be a mass vehicle in a niche world. But more companies are offering options that can deliver precision targeting – even with printed flyers. Take Quebecor Media's Le Sac Plus product, for instance. It can target as precisely as 250 doors – significantly more focused than the typical FSA of 9,000 doors. "You can imagine that within such a large FSA you have a wide range of consumers," says Patrice Lehoux, VP of National Sales for print and distribution at Montreal-based Quebecor Media. The meticulous targeting Le Sac Plus offers is good news for advertisers who want to zero in on the most promising leads cost-effectively. For instance, a company advertising pools could potentially limit its distribution to high-income houses, taking irrelevant addresses like apartment buildings out of the equation.

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DISTRIBUTION



NEWSPAPERS



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*Comscore Media Metrix - Sept 2011 to Feb 2012



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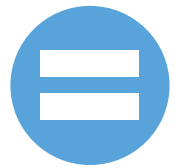


DISTRIBUTION



PROMOTION

YOUR CUSTOMER



RESULTS



you have a better and more compelling offer for a local merchant,” says Simon Jennings, chief revenue and digital officer at Toronto-based Postmedia Network, adding that consumers are more likely to trust ads for local merchants in local properties than they are with national or even global search tools. “[Search companies] can geo-target the hell out of it if they want, but the consumer doesn’t have the personal, emotional commitment to the brand.”

Getting Digital

When it comes to effective retail advertising, it’s no longer a question of on or off-line. It’s now a matter of leveraging both, and integrating all efforts across the board. According to a study by Yahoo! and ComScore, 89% of consumers research products online, while 93% of retail sales decisions still occur at the store level. “Retailers will need to think about how to influence product selection before the consumer enters their retail store,” says Lehoux. “This is a change in mindset whereby merchandising will need to be done both online and in-store.”

Abankwah agrees, and points out that data from loyalty programs can help retailers make more relevant, long-term connections outside of the store. “Today, people don’t shop the way they used to. People don’t go into a store and go to a shelf and compare products and pick one and walk out of the store. They go online, they do research, they talk to friends, they often walk through stores checking their mobile phones for competitors’ prices,” she says. “All those factors need to be part of the retailer’s overall marketing and operational strategy. We definitely think that a good loyalty strategy can help address all of that.”

As loyalty programs become an increasingly effective way for retailers to forge deeper connections with their customers, group-buying websites are proving themselves to be a great way to attract new shoppers. The proliferation of group-buying sites has not gone

unnoticed by Metroland. “We have a continued focus on our core business, but are rapidly developing and acquiring digital products like Flyerland, WagJag, Shopcatch and Save.ca,” says Orpen. “This strategy complements our core and captures audiences at the same pace as changing consumer behaviours.”

Postmedia is also on top of the group-buying trend with its property called SwarmJam. When a Calgary merchant runs a promotion with SwarmJam, for instance, Postmedia can support it across all of its properties, including newspapers, online and mobile. “It may show up on the back page of the Calgary Herald, TV rich-media ads across our website, or it may show up for Calgarians looking in the National Post or canada.com or any of our mobile products,” Jennings explains.

Quebecor Media has an online home for Le Sac Plus, too. The site currently features all of the flyers in the Quebec market, making it a one-stop-shop for browsing consumers. Le sacplus.ca also includes a daily deal section as well as weekly contests. Quebecor Media plans to roll out mobile components in the near future.

Augmenting print and flyer campaigns with online and loyalty initiatives can be a powerful way to collect valuable consumer data, and ultimately strengthen consumer relationships. “In today’s retail environment we see loyalty as more of a direct and dynamic relationship between the retail brand and the consumer,” says Abankwah. “In the past you may have had traditional points-based transactional-type programs, whereas today retailers will be leveraging more of the consumer data that comes from the program to create more of a two-way dialogue with the customer.”

Postmedia Network Inc.

Postmedia is Canada's largest publisher of paid, English-language daily newspapers. It publishes nine large-market dailies—including The Gazette in Montreal, The Province in Vancouver, the Calgary Herald, and one national newspaper, National Post—and a handful of community newspapers. Postmedia daily newspapers reach 4.3 million Canadian Adults each week.

Postmedia digital properties include the newspaper websites, canada.com, and niche sites that cover sports, entertainment and various verticals. The company also operates the daily deal website, swarmjam, and a start-up destination sprouter.com. Postmedia newspaper websites reach 31% of all Canadians who visit newspaper websites—nearly 5 million monthly unique visitors (UVs) and more than 7 million monthly UVs to the total network for owned and represented properties.





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Metroland Media Group

Metroland Media Group is a dynamic media company that delivers vital business and community information to millions of Ontario readers in print and online.

Recent acquisitions have extended Metroland's footprint east to Ottawa, north to North Bay, west to London and around Toronto's Golden Horseshoe. With its 112 community newspapers, three daily newspapers and extensive distribution services, Metroland reaches 87% of Ontario's population and 80% of Ontario's households.

With a route structure averaging 50 to 70 households, Metroland can target and deliver with industry renowned precision. Its in-house geographic information system (GIS) and research department utilizes customer sales data, geo-demographic profiling, consumer expenditure data and pyste clustering to create customer specific flyer optimization programs.

Metroland Media's innovations extend into the digital space, with 7.3 million monthly unique visitors to its stable of newspaper websites, apps, mobile and niche sites including flyerland.ca.

Flyerland.ca is Canada's number one website for national and local flyers, coupons and deals and offers an engaging, fully interactive experience that includes contests and product searches. Flyerland's audience is 78% female with an average household income of \$93,000, making it a highly desirable target.

Metroland Media Group is a wholly owned subsidiary of Torstar Corporation.



across all of Canada's top markets, with consumers who wake up every Saturday morning and run down and meet our paper and get upset if it's not there," he says. "Or, they go online and they read our websites. We have a heightened level of engagement on an A-tier level in each market."

Challenges and Opportunities Ahead

The road ahead for retail marketers isn't going to be without its hurdles. "Consumers' immediate access to price comparison-shopping via mobile devices while in-store will be a huge challenge for retailers," says Orpen. "Their value and differentiating in-store experiences and services will be extremely important in avoiding many products or categories from being commoditized."

But it's not all bad news for retailers – assuming they realize it's not business as usual anymore. "Conversely, there's never been more ways to communicate with consumers in their most desired way, at the right time and in the right place, from their kitchen tables to in-store," Orpen points out.

Lehoux also emphasizes that talking to consumers via multiple channels is key. "We can use all of our other properties to get everybody's attention," says Lehoux, adding that one of Quebecor Media's largest clients recently found incredible success leveraging Quebecor Media's internal agency using print, broadcast and online properties. "They beat sales records during Christmas, and sales are up significantly."

All of these new ways to communicate can be a dangerous thing, too. If a retailer's customer service isn't up to par, word can travel very, very quickly these days, which may cause some retailers to rethink their marketing spends. "Marketers may

Print Prevails

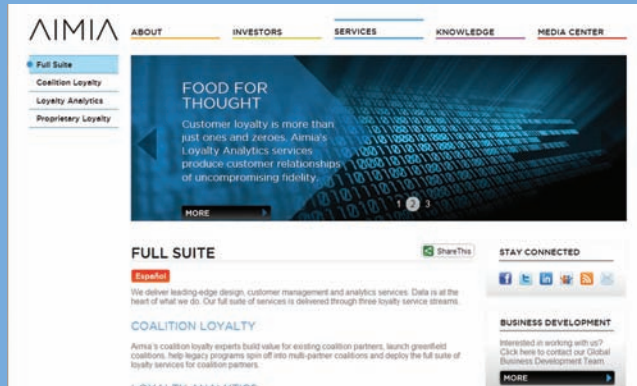
In a marketing world focused on all things digital, print ads and flyers are still incredibly effective vehicles when it comes to boosting store traffic. "Flipping through a catalogue, direct mail piece, or magazine is a more enjoyable experience. Newspapers are in a great position by virtue of their ability to sell two different products at the same time: digital and print, and one can feed into the other," says Lehoux. "Though there is a perception that growth in non-print formats far exceeds other forms of print media, when measured in percentage it is misleading as these are early adoption days for the digital environment."

With this in mind, Quebecor Media has invested \$250 million in a new state of the art printing platform to produce retail inserts, enabling it to be more nimble, cost-effective and competitive. "We're very cost-efficient during a very difficult time for retailers," says Lehoux.

Jennings agrees that print is still hugely popular among consumers. "We have really strong relationships

want to re-direct some of the money from mass-marketing campaigns into customer-service initiatives because customers are now marketing the brands online, globally,” says Abankwah.

As the path to purchase continues to lengthen and evolve, retailers and their clever industry partners keep figuring out new ways to connect with consumers, drive them into the store and get them to whip out their wallets. After all, at the end of the day that’s what it’s all about. •



Aimia

Aimia now incorporates Carlson Marketing’s global loyalty marketing services and builds on the company’s heritage by leveraging its global footprint to deploy a full suite of loyalty management services, to manage hundreds of the world’s largest and most successful customer and business loyalty initiatives.

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'Eff you' pendulum has swung: conservatism is the new cool

BY MIKE FARRELL

Brand affiliation trends, on both a mainstream and bubbling-under level, are often great indicators of sociocultural mores.

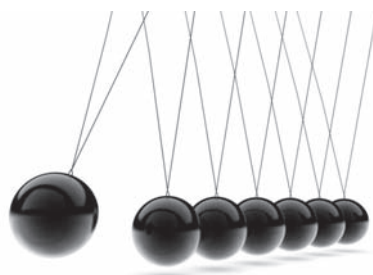
A recent study of young Canadians that Conversion just wrapped in partnership with SPC Card and *strategy* displays this in spades. The upshot is that brands, like any other currently demystified cultural entity (celebrities, politicians), continue to exert influence, but are increasingly under the microscope and laden with ongoing expectation.

Our fresh numbers indicate that, as has been the case with this generation for years, lending brands a sense of primacy is seen as negative and non-aspirational. Close to two thirds (62%) of young Canadians agree that "people place too much importance on brands." More a comment on not wanting to be seen as a slavish adulator of a certain brand than a subconscious indictment of modern corporate consumer culture (for some, I'm sure it's both) this remains a very telling perception.

On the flipside, an almost-identical percentage (61%) agreed that "I will purchase a brand if it stands for something I believe in."

recession have not entirely dimmed the brand-busting fervour that was part and parcel of youth culture attitude as Millennials entered the scene back in the late '90s and early 2000s.

Also worthy of consideration is the percentage of young people (close to four in 10, at 37%) that mentioned a brand no other person surveyed had mentioned as one of their favourites.



This is a fantastic reflection of the modern media landscape that this generation has been crucial in forming – things are highly niched-out and diversity reigns supreme. There are more opportunities for success in whatever game you're playing, but gone, in many ways, are the glory days of the monster mega-brands.

This all sounds like a bit of a consumer revolution and this is an apt description when looking at the more active role the new generation continues to play in choosing brands, compared to consumer culture pre-Windows 98.

However, this "revolution" isn't necessarily translating to a sense of rebelliousness amongst this generation on a mainstream level – at least for now.

There has been an ongoing hypothesis that I, and many others, established back at the start of the millennium (and all the *Vice* magazine, open source, "eff you" attitude that went with that time) that some cultural counterbalance would follow in the

form of conservatism. Many would agree that we're seeing quite a lot of this today on the socio-political level alone.

This study reflects that something similarly conservative is happening with brands that are performing relatively well today; the attributes associated with top brands in our study are highly pragmatic and traditional. "Comfortable" is the number one brand attribute for youth

THERE ARE MORE OPPORTUNITIES FOR SUCCESS IN WHATEVER GAME YOU'RE PLAYING, BUT GONE, IN MANY WAYS, ARE THE GLORY DAYS OF THE MONSTER MEGA-BRANDS

today, followed closely by "fun," "high quality," "athletic" and "fashionable."

The top brands themselves – well, at least the top 10 (in order: American Eagle, Bench, H&M, Nike, Forever 21, Aeropostale, Adidas, Lululemon, Converse and Hollister) echo back these attributes through different slices of the same universal pie of non-confrontational design based around basics and casual style. Largely gone, on a mainstream level, are fashion brands that, circa the early- to mid-2000s, used to rank high due largely to a stated sense of individuality, creativity and rebelliousness.

In the ceaseless and cyclical point and counterpoint between extremes that advances culture ever so slightly, the 37% with their own individual favourite brands – who are now not a part of this mainstream picture – are, again, where the action is.



MIKE FARRELL

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It's that "stands for something I believe in" part of the equation that we must place ongoing focus on as youth continue to expect their favourite brands to be transparent, honest, socially and environmentally responsible and generally culturally aligned. Apparently, generational maturity and the

Youth marketing is just marketing – on their turf and terms

BY ERIC ALPER

“WE WISH TO APPEAL TO TREND-SEEKING 18- TO 24-YEAR-OLD URBANITES WITHOUT UPSETTING OUR CORE DEMO OF AFFLUENT, TECH-AVERSE BOOMERS.”

There it is: a clear proclamation of the fact that youth are an important constituency.

But also a reminder of the mistakes we make in not going deep enough to understand who they are and how we drive their behaviour.

Marketing to youth is not dramatically different from marketing to other constituencies. They may be more heterogeneous, more in constant flux and more seemingly contradictory than other groups, but the same discipline should apply.

The core mission should be to build any youth engagement around the behaviours and values of the target. And yet, I’ve found this isn’t nearly as common as it should and could be.

What I noticed while looking back at a number of youth marketing briefs is that many clients tried to ascribe the same values and behaviours to new youth

targets as those demonstrated by their existing constituencies. Alternatively, and even worse, is the use of that all-encompassing group: young adults, 18 to 24. Youth culture, if such a thing exists, is highly divisible into subcultures. A suburban SK8er may not want to share the same space as an urban hip-hop fan.

Karl Rove once famously remarked that all marketers are either lumpers or splitters. In the case of youth, clients need to do a bit of both – identifying the key drivers, values and subcultures that unite them and demarcate them as different from some outside of the circle.



Among the issues that get me the most worked up is the suboptimal approach to youth consumer research.

A great deal of it is merely the application of adult research tools to youth marketing.

Remove college students from their natural habitat and install them in a windowless, fluorescent-lit room with a cheap conference table, lukewarm can of soda and the company of peers that may share only an age range in common – and a moderator that doesn’t speak their language – and the last thing you’ll get is insight.

Rather, marketers should invest in research that is more demonstrative of real behaviour, like true ethnographies, street and exit interviews, experimental marketing, seeding and the like – research that doesn’t divorce youth from the context in which they naturally experience brands.

Too many clients still seek one big idea that they deliver through a push-based communication approach. Forgetting the obvious need for two-way communications, the notion that one “message” (or, for that matter, a message at all) will consistently affect behaviour is misguided.

While this is increasingly a macro development, it is one that is most common for youth who treat their interaction with brands like they do interactions with people: we meet, we have many “lightweight interactions,” and over time, we decide if we’ll date, hook up, become friends or split.

This phenomenon was fascinatingly well-documented in *Grouped*, a book written by Paul Adams, former social researcher at Google and now with Facebook.

The simple takeaway is that marketers need to plan for a pinball approach to marketing rather than carpet bombing.

It’s not the age range, activity, product or existing communications platform that drives youth behaviour, but the integration of true understanding into action.

Maybe your target isn’t males and females 18-to-24, but instead 20-something free-thinking urbanites.

Maybe the brief of creating a social campaign isn’t right; maybe what your target really would engage with is a mobile game.

Maybe the notion of having a brand or product message is fatally flawed and, instead, what you need is great content or a movement.

You’ll never know until you outline a truly addressable group, make real choices, abandon self-reference, embrace a desire for understanding over validation and build new communication paradigms predicated on interactions. All of which is based on the biggest learning of all – we can’t just show up in the ‘hood wearing the right threads. We have to earn the right; we have to walk the talk.

Photo by Pat Castaldo



ERIC ALPER, Sid Lee VP & partner, is a leader of the agency’s burgeoning strategy practice, and has worked on an array of youth programs across apparel, automotive, consumer electronics, CPG and retail.



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The 2012 Shopper Marketing Forum

saw industry members gather at the Westin Harbour Castle in Toronto on March 6 and 7 to hear some of the top shopper marketing experts in the business share their views on how to move the industry forward.



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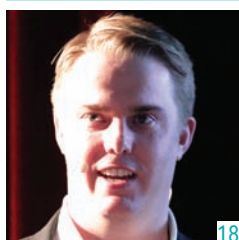
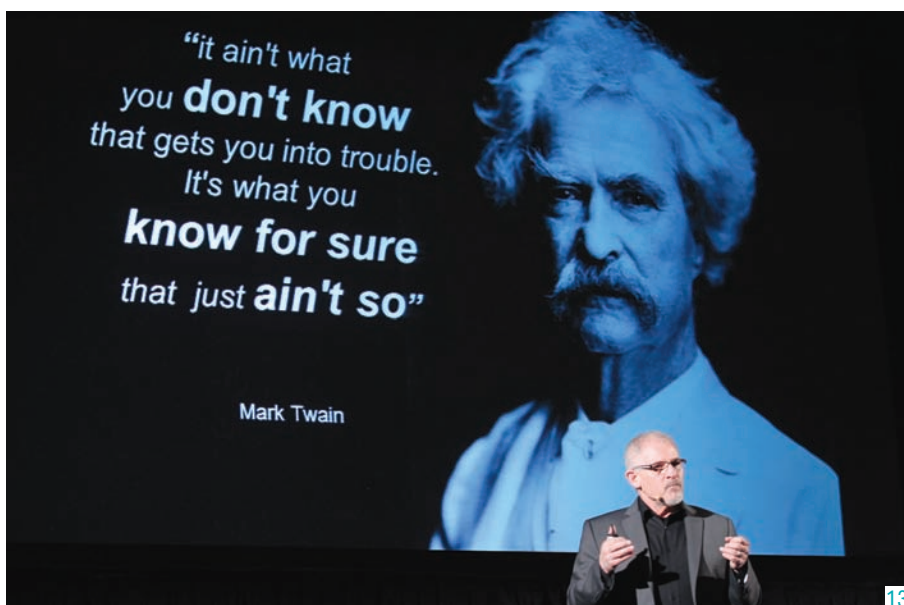
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1. Shopper Marketing Forum co-chair Martin Rydlo, director of strategy & initiatives, Campbell Company of Canada | 2. Keynote speaker Kit Yarrow, chair, department of psychology, Golden Gate University, and author of *Gen BuY: How Tweens, Teens and Twenty-Somethings are Revolutionizing Retail* | 3. Nicole Rocheleau, group shopper marketing manager, GlaxoSmithKline; Jason McDonnell, VP marketing, PepsiCo Foods Canada; Lisa Gunther, VP marketing, Newell Rubbermaid | 4. SMF co-chair Uwe Stueckmann, SVP marketing, Loblaw | 5. Kironmoy Datta, marketing director of health, Shoppers Drug Mart | 6. James Sorensen, SVP, TNS Retail and Shopper | 7. Derek Joynt, marketing executive | 8. Rich Butwinick, president and founder, Marketing Lab | 9. Patrick Moorhead, SVP group management director, mobile platforms, Drafftcb Chicago | 10. Sandra Sanderson, SVP marketing, Shoppers Drug Mart | 11. John Torella, senior partner, JC Williams Group | 12. Rosie Riolo-Serpa, AVP digital, Canadian Tire | 13. David Ciancio, SVP head of international client leadership, Dunnhumby UK | 14. Kevin Lund, VP global retail programs, Perennial | 15. Lynn Neal, NA retail strategy leader, P&G | 16. April Carlisle, leader of the North American shopper marketing centre of excellence, P&G | 17. Jason Reilly, director of marketing, Home Depot | 18. Bill Carlson, shopper marketing team leader, Unilever | 19. Monique Moran, shopper marketing manager, Johnson & Johnson | 20. Byron Ellis, senior director, media and digital, Shoppers Drug Mart | 21. Charlie Anderson, NA CEO, Saatchi and Saatchi X | 22. Wes Brown, senior director of national event & shopper marketing, Loblaw | 23. David Grisim, associate marketing director brand operations, P&G | 24. Angela Scardillo, VP marketing, Best Buy Canada | 25. Dr. Hugh Phillips, in-store scientist, Pareto | 26. Tony Chapman, partner and CEO, Capital C

The future of cool

TRENDING YOUTH TOPICS IN 2014

Raised on a steady diet of *Degrassi*, *90210* and *Beachcombers: The College Years*, the creatives at JWT are pretty sure they understand “the youths.” In fact, they’ve made a few predictions on some trends to expect in the year 2014.



FaceSpacester Plus

The war for social media supremacy is over. FaceSpacester Plus reigns supreme. If you're not using it in 2014, you basically don't exist. It's the first social media space that allows you to not only connect with friends and store information, but also upload your feelings. Because visible emotion will be so 2012 in 2014.



iHi

Face-to-face social interaction can be super awkward and incredibly time consuming. But with the iHi app, available on the iPhone 6, the art of conversation has been revolutionized. Simply hold up your iPhone to your friend's iPhone and let iHi have the conversation for you. Now you're free to decide whether to make eye contact, update your status on FaceSpacester Plus or simply stare into space until the conversation is over.



GAPPLE

If you're looking for a bit of cutting-edge technology with your casual urban wear, look no further than GAPPLE. Is that a USB port in your pants, or are you just happy to see me? Surprise, it's a USB port.



Lady Madonnaga

Lady Madonnaga obviously believes that imitation is the sincerest form of flattery. Without one original thought in her over-produced, auto-tuned catalogue, she's managed to become the most popular musical artist among the coveted youth demographic. You can't go anywhere without hearing hits like “Voguer Face” or “Just Dance Like a Virgin.” Her sold-out Born to Express Myself tour will be sponsored by GAPPLE.



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VICES & VIRTUES

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